N°. II. SATURDAY, JAN. 15, 1803.

POLITICS.

OUR present essay on this subject must be very concise, as the week which has elapsed since our last, though prolific in rumours, has been barren of authenticated facts. In our present feverish state, of peace without a pretence of amity, and of continual irritation though not of express defiance, it is natural that rumours should produce strong sensations in the public mind; but as we profess to treat of events and their probable results, not of those anticipations which are sometimes founded in truth, but more frequently fabricated for fraudulent purposes, we shall merely recapitulate, without attempting to discuss them.

The apparent ill-success of the French in St. Domingo served as a basis to a report that they had, in despair of conquering that island, turned their arms against Jamaica, and effected a landing. This intelligence was dis-

proved almost as soon as circulated; the very ship by which it was said to have been brought, did not exist.

Another rumour, as yet uncontradicted, and which seems to gain more belief, is, that the Spaniards have given notice to our cutters of logwood to quit Honduras.

A third report relates to the establishment of a new military harbour at Turnhout. This project is said to be highly approved by the First Consul of France, and to form the motive of an intended visit to Antwerp.

On these two surmises we shall make no comment. When their truth is more effectually ascertained, we shall state our opinions with the temper that becomes us.

We have received many hints on the changes in the form of government intended to take place in France, but it is foreign to our purpose to descant on the internal regulations of any country, unless we are obliged to do so by intemperate vaunting, or indiscreet comparisons. M. Fiévée, whose letters on England seem to be a sort of quack medicine to cure the French people of the disease called *Anglomanie*, says, that through commiseration of the English, he forbears making any comparisons between the existing governments of the two countries. If Frenchmen really think their own constitution so

replete with freedom and happiness, that an Englishman cannot contemplate it without feeling all the misery of envy, let them continue to think so; provided they will have the goodness not to attempt, either by force or guile, to obtrude their system on *us*. If we could convince a much greater portion of the French people than we conceive to be assailable by tranquil argument, that their government is as contemptible and corrupt as M. Fiévée wishes them to believe that ours is, they ought not to thank us. If they are now content, the writer on this side the Channel who should awaken them from their happy dream, might justly expect to receive reproaches in the terms used by Horace's lunatic;

> Pol me occidistis, amici,
> Non servastis,—cui sic extorta voluptas,
> Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus error.

VIEW OF FRENCH LITERATURE.

We shall now direct our attention to the dramatic exhibitions in Paris; and as a preliminary to any discussion of their merit and quality, we shall offer a few observations on their quantity.

Seventeen theatres open their doors every evening for the entertainment of Paris, where the population does not exceed 628,000 souls. It may be calculated that the *spectacles* of this city occupy on an average, the leisure of 20,000 individuals, or nearly one thirtieth part of the whole. The following is a list of the Theatres :—

1. THE OPERA, or *le Théâtre de la Republique et des arts*, situate in *la rue de la Loi*, formerly *la rue Richlieu*.
2. *Le Théâtre françois de la Republique, rue de la Loi*, at the corner of *rue St. Honoré*: this was formerly the *Théâtre françois du faubourg St. Germain*.
3. *L'Opera comique, rue Feydeau*, the entrance in *rue de la Loi*: this was formerly the Italian theatre of *la rue Mauconseil*.
4. The Italian *Opera Buffa, rue Favars*, the entrance in *rue de la Loi*.
5. *Le théâtre Louvois, rue de Louvois*, the entrance in *rue de la Loi*, opposite the opera : this theatre is under the management of Picard, a dramatist of some repute.
6. The theatre called *Montansier*, formerly *the théâtre Beaujolois*, in the buildings of the Palais Royal, behind *rue de la Loi*.
7. *Le théâtre du Vaudeville*, in the square of the Palais Royal, almost facing *la rue de la Loi*.*
8. *Le théâtre de la Cité*, opposite the *Palais de Justice*.
9. *Le théâtre de la porte St. Martin*, formerly the opera

* We have given the topography of these seven principal theatres, that our readers may form an idea of the confusion and impediments which prevail in this *rue de la Loi* when the houses begin to empty.

house, built to supply the place of that which was burnt at the Palais Royal.

10. *Les Variétés nationales etrangeres*, formerly *the théâtre Moliere*, built in *la rue St. Martin*, at an early period of the revolution, by an actor named Borsault, who was afterwards a member of the convention, a drinker of blood,* and a worthy colleague of his brother actor-legislators Collot d'Herbois and Fatre d'Eglantine.

11. *Le théâtre des etrangeres*, formerly *du marais*, established after the commencement of the revolution by Caron de Beaumarchais, at one of the extremities of Paris, exclusively for the representation of his own pieces. This theatre was much frequented in 1792, when the great attractions were two new pieces—*Robert Chef de Brigands*, a farce; and the drama of *la Mere coupable*.

12. *Le théâtre du Boulevard*.

13. *L'Ambigu comique*, formerly Audinot's.

14. *Le théâtre de la gaité*, formerly Nicolet's.

15. *Le théâtre des jeunes artistes*, formerly *des éleves de l'opera*.

16. *Le théâtre sans prétension*. And

17. *Le théâtre pittoresque et mécanique*.

What mines of dramatic wealth, it is natural to exclaim, must be required for the support of these theatres, and what labour in supplying them! yet for a long time past, all these theatres have produced nothing but miscarriages more or less conspicuous. Not a dozen of the new pieces which have been

* *Buveur du Sang*, a name given to those who were employed in executing the sanguinary decrees of the committee of public safety.

played at the two principal theatres, *l'Opéra*, and *les François*, within these twelve years, continue to be exhibited. All the monstrous dramas brought forth by anarchy, have disappeared since the authority sprung from Jacobinism destroyed its parent, and converted itself into absolute despotism. The interest of the governors, and the taste of the governed concurred in discarding the ebullitions of Chenier's heated brain, and the disgusting carricatures which, for ten years together, attracted them. But, on the other hand, the fear of offending that same authority, by allusions which are always greedily seized by the public, has obliged the managers to lay on the shelf a great number of pieces of the old and new stock. Collin d'Harleville, one of the first dramatic writers now in France, produced about three years ago, a comedy in five acts, in verse, called *l'école des jeunes femmes, ou les mœurs du jour.* In one of the scenes, a footman, after he has announced that dinner is ready, and heard a part of the conversation between the master and his guests, remains a moment on the stage to utter a comparison between the manners of his masters, in old times, and these upstarts of the day. His soliloquy terminates in these words:

——————*les ridicules êtres!*
Et comment se fait il que se soient lá nos maitres?

This observation generally produced loud laughter, at the expence of contractors, and of certain directors, counsellors of state, and other *ridicules êtres*; but for fear the allusion should be applied still higher, an *imperious* (for we are not yet to use the word *imperial*) order was issued for suppressing the piece. Voltaire's Œdipus, and many other *chef-d'œuvres* of those French poets, who formerly constituted the pride of the nation, are in a similar state of proscription.

For fear the vigour of the police should not be sufficient to prevent the representation of plays which might furnish unpleasant allusions, government has recently placed the four principal theatres and their actors under the jurisdiction or immediate controul of the four *préfets du palais*, who now exercise the functions of the *gentilshommes de la chambre du roi*. At the head of those who fill the stations of the maréchals de Richelieu and de Duras, the dukes de Fleury and de Villequier, we see a certain marquis of yesterday, styling himself the *marquis de Luçay*, but who is, in fact, the son of a heavy *financier*, named Bouret de Villemorien, and grandson of a footman. The opera fell into the department of this new fangled gentleman of the bed-chamber, but his important avocations at the palace engaging his whole atten-

tion, he named a deputy, thus creating an appointment equal to that of *intendant des menus plaisirs du roi.* His choice for this office fell upon M. Morel, a *çi-devant* turnpike-gate-keeper, who exercised his calling in the road between Paris and Versailles.

M. Morel then, is at this day, the director in chief of the opera, which will probably soon resume its ancient title of *academie imperiale de musique.*

The theatre will, however, in all probability, be greatly improved by this appointment. M. Morel has written the words of several successful operas, as *la Caravane; Panurge dans l'isle des lanternes;* and *les mysteres d'Isis;* he is thoroughly acquainted with the details relative to the preparation of that complicated *spectacle* the opera; he was, in fact, for a short time, sub-director of the *Menus-plaisirs.* The late queen procured him as a reward for his services, a place worth 40,000 livres a year; and it is but justice to say that he never partook in any act of the revolution.

Within these few years the opera has produced only four pieces of any consequence: —*Hecube,* which failed; *Adrien,* which is no longer performed, though recommended by the music of Méhul; *les mysteres d'Isis,* which is principally supported by the splendour of show, and the original music of Mo-

zart; and *Anacreon*, which the music of Gretry will keep alive, as long as there are men capable of feeling the charms of nature and truth. They have brought out but two or three grand ballets at this theatre, though the dancing is always better than the singing.

[To be continued.]

THE THEATRE.

She stoops to conquer was written thirty years ago by Doctor Goldsmith, avowedly a farcical comedy, for the purpose of opposing a false taste then prevalent, both in London and Paris, for sentimental comedy, or *la Comedie larmoyante*. It consisted of a sort of novel worked up into comedy, such as an author without much exertion, and very little taste, would probably adopt.

Goldsmith's comedy was not, without difficulty, accepted by the Manager of Covent Garden, and when it had been read in the green-room, the characters of young Marlow and Hastings were rejected by the first-rate performers, and fell to the lot of Lee Lewes and Dubellamy. The one had only played in farces, and was the Harlequin of the theatre; and the other was an humble performer in sing-

song: Lee Lewes acquitted himself so well as to be afterwards esteemed an actor of ability, and important to the success of every new comedy. This play furnished also to another performer, then scarcely known to the town, an opportunity of displaying the first rate comic abilities. The part of Tony Lumpkin was assigned to Quick; and if we may compare great things with small, Booth gained no more fame in Cato than Quick in Tony. In short, that play, which was brought out late in the season, was decried behind the curtain, and expected to be damned before it, gave fame to two young performers, had a run for twenty nights, and in the subsequent season had not lost its attraction.

Young Marlow by Lee Lewes, Hastings by Dubellamy, Hardcastle by the inimitable Shuter, Miss Hardcastle by the sprightly Mrs. Bulkeley, who spoke a most appropriate epilogue, Mrs. Hardcastle by Mrs. Green, and Tony Lumpkin by Mr. Quick, formed the memorable first cast of a play, which, for its success arising out of genuine humour, has seldom been surpassed.

Though, upon the whole, there are situations in this play that might be claimed by farce, rather than regular comedy; yet such are the powers of true genius, that all the incidents seem but to take their true course, and

the colours to be drawn from pure nature only, whilst the masterly touches, which every now and then are thrown over the most ridiculous situations, perfectly secure and defend the performance from too near an approach to the appellation of farce. To come so near, and yet to steer clear of it, genius alone could have executed with success.

The present performers at Drury-lane, if compared with these originals, will certainly be found deficient. Young Marlow, Hardcastle, Tony Lumpkin, and Mrs. Hardcastle, were much better represented by the originals. Shuter had more *vis comica* than perhaps any actor since the days of Nokes, and therefore it was not to be expected that Dowton, who never chooses his parts, should approach him. Barrymore was far from giving a striking model of the character of young Marlow.—Mrs. Sparks labours too much—is too stiff and formal, and her features are too hard; there is neither sufficient complacency in her countenance, nor ease in her manners, to exhibit such an unfortunate and unconquerable affection, as to spoil her son by excessive indulgence, and to bring on herself the undutiful and unfeeling reward, of being driven round her house, and wilfully overturned in a horse-pond This is the strong moral of the play, and requires the greatest force of acting: it

admirably points out the consequence of too fond indulgence to a son, of permitting him to keep low company, and of neglecting his education. Miss Hardcastle by Mrs. Glover was not surpassed by Mrs. Bulkeley. This lady has powers which neither neglect nor unjust preference can prevent from being duly appreciated by the public. Tony Lumpkin by Bannister has not even so much negative merit as Marlow by Barrymore. A manager has the power of selecting his parts, and can therefore only charge his failures on his want of talent or judgment. He was not manager, it is true, when he first represented Tony Lumpkin, but he has now the power of relinquishing an unsuccessful attempt: he was bred in London, and till within these few years, always played in London: his experience should have taught him, that rustic nature is too coy to throw herself suddenly into the arms of a cockney.—Collins should have acted Tony Lumpkin. H

THE ESSAYIST.

There is a Junto of ingenious and learned gentlemen in this happy country, who are so kind as to read every thing that is written, and to criticise every thing they read. The bene-

fits arising from these their public-spirited labours are infinite: for these reading gentlemen are so good as to write also, and once in every month to publish their reports. To their hands therefore, with all due respect, I commit these essays, assured that, if they find them worthy, they will give them their protection; being perfectly apprized that, if they do not find them unworthy, nobody else will; for who can be so well able to discover dullness as they, who have so many dull authors to deal with?

Eloquence was never required of oracles; neither is fine writing expected from these gentlemen, who, from the nature of their studies, are exposed to catch the very habits they are accustomed to correct.—Like men, who work at dangerous and unwholesome trades, they are subject to be infected by the materials which they are employed upon. As I am but a sort of table-decker to the Pic Nic, I cannot expect them to review these culinary essays in a style much better than my own.—At all events, I am prepared to submit to their correction, and if they soften it with a few kind words, I shall be everlastingly obliged to them.

Having thus performed my duty to my more immediate masters, I hope I may be excused from making any apology to the public at large.—A periodical writer can no more

pause to make compliments, than a mail-coach can stop to pay visits.—The reader who deals experimentally with me for these sheets, incurs so small a risque in the purchase, that I do not hold myself very seriously bound to beg his custom or bespeak his candour. As I set out in perfect peace and good humour with the world, they must not be slight provocations that will ruffle my temper, or small discouragements that break my spirit. In the course of these essays I shall probably be found to make free with other men's crudities, and they are perfectly welcome to amuse themselves with mine.

One of my first objects is to do justice to the age I live in, and uphold my contemporaries against the ungracious comparisons which some are too apt to draw; who weave all their laurels for the skulls of skeletons, and cannot find candour in their hearts to bestow one sprig upon any man who is alive to feel the favour. To these mortifying and mortified members of the community, who determine to admire nothing

Nisi quod libitina sacravit,

I do not find myself disposed to be extremely civil. The hand that death has stopped can write no more—praise cannot reach that writer—encouragement cannot rouse him to any new attempts—his work is done—but who

can tell to what extent the genius of a living man may carry him? And if it is criminal to damp the courage of the defenders of our country; upon the same principle it is illiberal and infamous to depress the spirit, and check the energy of those who are born to be the ornaments of it.

Whatever candour first attempts are entitled to, this Essay has a right to claim; and though I am under none of those excessive tremors which some authors affect to feel, when it is their pleasure to be very humble; nevertheless, I can perceive that introductory essays are not easily dispatched: first words are as apt to hang upon the pen of the writer as upon the tongue of the stammerer; but if the one without wit, and the other without articulation, keep stammering on to the end of the chapter, it will be time for patience to declare off, and quit their company.

I hope the proprietors of the Pic Nic will keep their table well served with contributary viands of good taste and savour; hitherto they have produced nothing but some scraps of false wit, extracted from those diurnal publications, which are certainly not remarkable for any wit at all. I hope they will in future treat us with some specimens of a better flavour, that we may have

Noctes cœnasque Divum,

Dishes fit for the Gods, not scraps and offals only *fit for hounds*.

If they will turn to their prototypes *Athenæus and Macrobius*, they will see how those Pic Nic caterers provided for the public; in the mean time, under the name of one who was professedly a dealer in scraps, I subscribe myself PUBLIUS SYRUS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,

I very much approve the design of your Paper, and I equally admire the spirit with which you appear resolved to conduct it. Nevertheless I cannot but express my apprehensions that you are fallen on such incorrigible times, that, with all the talents you appear to possess, and all the ability you may call to your assistance, your laudable attempt will prove a progressive scene of discouragement and difficu ty.

In the first place, you have to stem the torrent of fashion, at a period when fashion is all-powerful—when *notoriety* is its object, and *effrontery* is its principle: this demon is no longer satisfied with influencing exterior decorums, or dictating to the tailor, the dressmaker, or the milliner, but descends into the heart, and forms the character. A fluttering

foible may be chased away by the dread of animated or lively exposure; but a fixed and determined principle of conduct, whose supporters join in the very laugh which the ridiculous portraiture of it excites, will not soon yield to the strongest suggestions of reason, or the most ardent remonstrances of virtue.

I could name a man whose mode of life has filled the windows of the caricature shops with prints, and who feels a degree of magnanimity in making these monuments of his depravity the decorations of his dressing-room. Will such a man, and those who imitate him, be corrigible by the serious exhortations, or the light airy satire of your paper, when the hisses of an exasperated audience at the Opera house cannot drive away the fops who protrude themselves on the stage and infest the performance? If fashion so far surmounts the feelings of maternal tenderness and maternal duty, as to disrobe female youth of that modest appearance which is its most distinguishing charm, I cannot but feel some alarm for the success of your operations against that powerful enemy, for whose discomfiture, in the true spirit of chivalry, you have sharpened your sword, and pointed your spear.

You seem to think that the newspapers are powerful engines in supporting the follies, and

fomenting the vices, which are the objects of hostility; and I shall take the liberty of troubling you with some notions of mine on the subject.

There was a time when newspapers had some degree of credit, when their only object was to give the occurrences of the times, and their readers might depend on the truth of what they read. They have, however, long since assumed a new character. On public subjects they are entirely influenced by party; and in their domestic department, the struggle is continual for the earliest insight into the circle of pleasure and amusement, and the daily transactions of fashionable life. Thus the principal object of a modern newspaper is to mislead the public in favour of a political party, and to amuse those, whose only politics and party is fashion, by details of every circumstance, however minute or frivolous, which arises in the motley round of dissipation. The newspapers are the Ephemera of fashion: they take their shape from the general manners and dispositions of the moment; in short, they must wear the livery of those who support them. It appears, therefore, to me, that instead of letting loose your wit or your sarcasm against the public papers; you should rather attack those who encourage them by their favour, and nurture them by their follies. A news-

paper is an article of trade, and the persons who are engaged in manufacturing it must produce the kind of commodity which will secure a sale. They only look for advantage, and it is very probable that the disgraceful frivolity which is daily seen in the pages of the Morning Post, and of the other papers which follow its example, may be coolly regarded with as much contempt by the Proprietors as by you or me. But then, the sale, the advantage, and the profit: these are, indeed, overwhelming considerations; for the feelings of trade never were, nor will they ever be, governed by sentiments of moral fitness, intellectual advancement, or national virtue. The spirit of commerce is one thing—public honour is another; nor will it be easy to reconcile the principles that distinctly govern them

I have already observed, that notoriety and effrontery are the leading characteristic features of fashion. To be known is a prevailing object of fashionable life, and, consequently, the most ready means of extending that notoriety are generally engaged. The Morning Post does not take the lead of the daily prints, from its intrinsic merits, though it displays occasional gleams of fine writing and political ability;* but by its favoured

* On this subject we can inform our correspondent, that the Editor and Proprietor of the Morning Post have

applications to the card-racks, and porters' books, and the activity of its spies and runners, in resorts of fashionable people. But this is not all:—these papers, which are history at one end of the town, are instruction at the other; and the same sheet, which gives to the Arabella of Grosvenor-square the narrative of her own splendor, affords the less enlightened inhabitant of the eastern district of the metropolis, the subject of elegant conversation. Without such communication, Mrs. Grogram, the mercer's wife on Ludgate-hill, would live in ignorance of polite life; Mrs. Puncheon, the West-India merchant's lady in Philpot-lane, would not acquire the language of the square, which she hopes one day to inhabit; nor would the Jew broker of St.

no share in these occasional specimens of fine writing, beyond that of translating the words of a foreign politician. With respect to politics, the conductors of that print are "ignorant as dirt," ignorant even of the geographical situation of countries about which they are obliged to write. They have, to be sure, been pretty lavish in their abuse of the First Consul, *especially since the reception of English newspapers in France has been prohibited*; but their loyalty and love of Great-Britain are exactly at the same point where they stood during the state trials in 1794, at the time of the mutiny at the Nore, or at that proud period when the prints, *on that system*, were honoured with the exclusive patronage and marginal recommendations of the Executive Directory.

Mary-Axe be able to watch the progress of fashionable dissipation to the 150 per centage of his office.

You may, it is true, get an occasional laugh at the egregious nonsense of the daily prints; but the disgraceful prevalence can only be attacked with success through the patrons and patronesses of it. If people of rank and fashion can be made ashamed of the fashionable frippery, the frippery shops must supply their windows, shelves, and shew-glasses, with articles of superior manufacture.

To give notoriety another form, and to surround it with satiric emblazonments, will be the only way to check the spirit of effrontery by which it is at present supported. It may be a post of danger, but it is a post of honour: *non sine pulvere palmam*, is a maxim which you must have adopted when you engaged in the present undertaking, for the success of which you will be pleased to receive the best wishes of OLD SQUARE TOES.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,

I perceive that in your just exposure of the miserable puns and nonsense of several Morning Papers, you have not suffered the *British*

Press to escape your censure. Now it does not appear to me that there is any great reason to complain, if, amidst the information and good sense which predominate in that paper, there should be a column allotted for the chit-chat of the day, particularly as the articles are connected with literary circumstance and character. That "the *Earl of Clonmell* is reckoned among the most promising students at Cambridge," must be considered as a piece of literary information: and as the *Duchess of Devonshire* has condescended to become an authoress, it is a duty in the British Press to inform the public that, "her Grace was expected in London from France." It was also perfectly consistent with the character of a paper devoted to subjects of literature, to express a supreme degree of satisfaction, "that *Mr. Fawcett* the actor's indisposition is a very slight one," as well as to particularize the splendour of *Mrs. Siddons*'s PIC NIC at Dublin. The description of *Lord Carlisle*'s new coach must, I think, be considered in the same point of view. That nobleman is an author, and has published a very elegant edition of his Plays, which are printed by Bulmer, in the highest style of typographic beauty: the carriage, therefore, of such a noble author, is a subject that comes within the natural com-

prehension of a literary newspaper; and it would, in my opinion, have deviated from the promise of its prospectus, if the British Press had not informed the Public, that the *Earl of Carlisle* had launched a new coach, whose body, lining, carriage, and hammer-cloth, are all of fawn colour; and which vies in splendor with that which has been recently built for the Lord Mayor of London. The account of *Madame Recamier*'s bed, appeared indeed, to be too indelicate for the chaste character of the Press; but my book-seller, *Mr. Vellum*, who is considered as a wit in Paternoster-row, having observed that *sheets* were common to both, I yielded to the sprightliness as well as novelty of his idea, and refrained from urging any further objections. At the same time, Mr. Vellum was so good as to communicate a plan which had been formed to secure to the British Press the most attractive and correct account that has hitherto been given of the daily transactions of the metropolis; which is no less than to engage the whole body of booksellers to attend to and collect the occurrences of every kind, which take place in their respective districts. It is as follows:—

Bond-street is to be submitted to the numerous booksellers who inhabit that predominant thoroughfare. *Mr. Robson* will at-

tend to the old peers, to dignitaries of the church, and dowagers; whilst *Mr Faulder* will look sharp after the fortune-hunters; and the rest of their brethren will take the miscellaneous passengers among them. The Cyprians, on crossing Oxford-street from Bond-street, on their return to Mary-le-bone, very naturally present themselves to the attention of *Mr. Bell*, who being the publisher of *the Monk*, is admirably qualified to make the necessary observations. *Mr. Debrett* and *Mr. Hatchard* will take care of Piccadilly; *Mr. Stockdale* being better employed in collecting the profound opinions of the enlightened politicians who frequent his shop. *Mrs. Humphrys* will give the Caricatures of St. James's-street; and *Bulmer*, the Printer, will transmit an hot-pressed account of any interesting transactions of Cleveland-court, as well as of the guard on duty at the Palace. *George Nicol*, bookseller to his Majesty, is pre-eminently qualified to communicate the lively histories of King's-place; while it is impossible for a row to be kicked up at the Union Club, but *Old Becket* and *Young Evans* must be in the way to hear a good account of it: *Harding* may have his eye on Carlton-house, and *Jeffreys* may collect some useful materials from Market-street and the back-door of the Opera. The men of genius, who

frequent *Mr. Ridgeway*'s repository of loyalty in York-street, have promised occasional contributions; and some smart paragraphs have already been received respecting the conduct of the swans who inhabit the water in St. James's-square. To *Messrs. Egerton* will be consigned the pregnant and ever varying scene of Charing-cross: they may also take an occasional peep into Durham-yard and the Horse Guards. *Mr. Payne*, of the Mews Gate, will look a little to Castle-street, and the numerous cranny alleys in his neighbourhood. *King*, the auctioneer, will furnish many a pleasant lot from the Covent-garden Piazzas and their vicinity: while *Leigh* and *Sotheby* may follow his example from Tavistock-street. *Mr. Otridge* may enlarge on the upper part of the Strand, and borrow occasional scraps of natural history from the Menagerie of Exeter Change. The lower part of the Strand, with Catharine-street, will be undertaken by *Cadell* and *Davies*, a branch of duty, which, as they have been lately married, they may undertake with perfect safety. *Old Gardner*, from his long and studious acquaintance with the parish of St. Clement Danes, is incomparably qualified to procure intelligence of the very interesting concerns of Drury-lane, Clare-market, the Crown and Anchor, and the con-

venient scenes of seclusion in his agreeable neighbourhood.

Mr. Kearsley will take the upper part of Fleet-street, and the two Temples, with the several buildings, courts, walks, lanes, and backways thereunto belonging and appertaining. The law booksellers are *retained* to communicate much *special* and *original* matter from Chancery-lane and Lincoln's-inn; and *Mr. White* will look to the history of Fleet-market, and the concerns of Bridewell. St. Paul's Church-yard, and all its varieties, are familiar subjects to *Messrs. Johnson* and *Rivington;* while *Mr. Phillips* will give select *memoranda* from the conversations of the *Illuminati* who frequent the Chapter Coffee-house. The Court of Assistants of the Stationers' Company have voluntarily engaged to procure accounts of the meetings, feastings, and other important business of the livery companies. A committee of the trade in Paternoster-row and Ave-Maria-lane, will occasionally meet to receive and transmit accounts of the very affecting transactions of the Old Bailey and Newgate, and that well-known scene of humanity called Smithfield; with the pleasures of St. Martin's-le-grand, the hurry of Cheapside, and the bustle of the Swan with two Necks. *Mr. Mawman* and *Messrs. Vernor* and *Hood*, of

the Poultry, have reserved themselves for the lively records of the Mansion-house, the due detail of city state and civic honours, and a luminous display of aldermanic oratory, and common-council eloquence. *Mr. Richardson*, under the Royal Exchange, and the print-sellers in the adjoining alleys, will be able, from their literary situation, to produce no small store of elegant communications. *Mr. Asperne* will offer strings of moral aphorisms relative to trade and commerce; and the booksellers and stationers in Leadenhall-street are in the way to obtain poignant jests, affecting narratives, and fine strokes of satire, from the London Tavern, the East India House, and Leadenhall-market. *Mr. Steele*, of Tower-hill, will derive no small fund of amusement from the humours of Wapping and Rag-fair; and a notary public, who understands nine languages, and must consequently be considered as a very literary man, has promised to enliven the British Press with a few brief memoirs of the leading fashionables of Bevis-Marks, Duke's-place, and Houndsditch. *Messrs. Lackington* and *Allen* may be expected to procure variety of intelligence from Moorfields, Bedlam, and Grub-street; while Holborn and St. Giles's cannot be entrusted to better circumspection than that of *Mr. Cuthell*, of Middle-row.

Mr. Dulau, the French bookseller, will have an eye upon the company who visit Sir Joseph Banks, and the more lively gentry who frequent the white-house on the opposite side of Soho-square. To the tribe of circulating libraries of St. Mary-le-bone is confided the various and varying history of that very interesting and prolific part of the metropolis.

To the account of this masterly plan of intelligence, I have only to add my congratulations to the public, who are so soon to enjoy the advantages of it—you may, if you please, communicate it to the readers of your elegant publication, for

I am

A FRIEND TO THE PRESS.

P. S. I must beg leave to add, that *Mr. Isaac Read*, of Staple-inn, whose communicative disposition is too well known to all who have applied to it; and whose knowledge of English literature exceeds that of any person now living, is expected to furnish the British Press with a correct list of all the booksellers who have lived in London, and the Universities, since the invention of Printing. It is almost superfluous to add, that such a collection of names must be highly interesting, instructive, and amusing to every class of readers.

FASHIONABLE INTELLIGENCE.

CREWE HALL, long the acknowledged seat of English hospitality, has this Christmas been the scene of unrivalled festivity. On Wednesday, the 4th instant, there was a splendid ball and supper, to the latter of which near an hundred persons sat down. On Thursday a dinner was given to a select party, and in the evening all the visitors of that and the preceding day were gratified with theatrical amusements; the picture gallery having been prepared for the occasion, and fitted up in a very commodious style. The performance commenced with a prologue from Midsummer Night's Dream, but altered and made applicable to the occasion. Midas then followed, and went off with the happiest effect, and the reiterated bursts of applause amply spoke the merits of the several performers: *Midas* was played with the most successful humour. *Mysis* was animated and judicious, while *Nysa* would have ensured commendations from an assemblage of London critics. The scene of the celestials was well managed, and *Hebe*, *Venus*, and *Juno* appeared to influence the hearts of all their *mortal* gazers. *Midas* was followed by

a new piece, written for the occasion, entitled *One bird in the hand worth two in the bush.* It was meant merely as a vehicle for music; the idea, however, is ingenious, and replete with comic effect. The scene is a country fair, where, among many other curiosities, is offered to public notice the invisible girl, with whom the hero of the piece has become desperately in love; and in hopes of obtaining her, has deserted his former mistress: he at length, however, perceives his folly, and verifies the proverb, *One bird in the hand*, &c. Among other characters at the fair was a *strolling player*, excellently supported, who did indeed *out-Herod* all the *Herods* that ever went before him. The music was well received.

After the curtain dropped, the company were regaled with a supper; after which several songs were sung, and the evening closed with universal festivity.

All the company remained on Friday, but the greater part did not take leave till Saturday. Perhaps the whole kingdom cannot boast of a happier circle than graced the ancient and venerable domain of Crewe Hall.

ON BEING LEFT ALONE AFTER DINNER.

How shall I here employ my time
Alone, without or prose or rhyme,
Or pencil to amuse me?
Nor pen, nor paper, to be found,
No friend, to push the bottle round,
Or for its stay abuse me.

The servants come and find me here,
And stare upon me like the deer
On Selkirk, in Fernandez;
And quite as tame, they wipe the chairs,
And scrub—and hum their fav'rite airs,
And ask what my command is.

I wish one knew the way to change
Customs so barbarous and strange,
So savage and inhuman:
I wish the sex were kinder grown,
And when they find a man alone,
Would treat him like a woman.

Well—here 's to her who far away,
Cares not that I'm or grave or gay;
And then no more I'll drink:
But fold my arms, and meditate,
And clap my feet upon the grate,
And on grave matters think.

'Tis—let me see—full sixteen years
(And wond'rous short the time appears)
Since with enquiry warm,
With beauty's novel pow'r amaz'd,
I follow'd 'mid the crowd that gaz'd,
On ———'s beauteous form.

Up ———'s fatiguing streets I ran,
(Just half pretending to be man,
And fearful to intrude)

Busied I look'd on some employ,
Or limp'd to seem some *other* boy,
Lest she should think me rude.

The sun was bright, and on her face,
As proud to shew this stranger grace,
Shone with its purest rays;
And through the folds that veil'd her form,
Motion display'd its happiest charm,
To catch th' admiring gaze.

The smiling lustre of her eyes,
That triumph'd in our wild surprise,
Well I remember still:
They spoke it *joy* to *give* delight,
And seem'd to say, "If I'm the sight,
Good folks, pray take your fill."

And can it be, that 'neath this roof,
Whilst I sit patiently aloof,
This 'witching form can be!
Quick let me fly—avaunt my fears,
'Tis but a door——and *sixteen years*,
Divide this fair and me!

Alas! that beauty shou'd grow old!
Alas! that passion shou'd be cold;
Alas! that rhymes shou'd fail:—
And oh! while thus I sadly sing,
Alas! that not a bell shou'd ring,
To close my mournful tale.

Ye youths debarr'd your fair one's eye;
Ye that for love to *mem'ry* fly,
Attend this moral rhyme:
List to the pensive lay it pours,
"The devil take your doors and hours,
Your Carpenters and Time!"

SONG.

Behold yon gaudy painted flow'r,
Gay blushing to the morning rays;
It sprung and blossom'd in an hour,
With night's chill blast its bloom decays.
Yet thoughtless maidens, as they rove,
Mistake, and call this flow'ret *love.*

But LOVE's true flow'r, before it springs,
Deep in the breast its fibres shoots,
And clasps the heart, and round it clings,
And fastens by a thousand roots;
Then bids its strengthen'd tendrils climb,
And braves the chilling blast of time.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Herculean strength, and a Stentorian voice,
Of wit a fund, of words a countless choice:
In learning rather various than profound,
In truth intrepid, in religion sound:
A trembling frame, and a distorted sight,
But firm in judgment, and in genius bright;
In controversy rarely known to spare,
But humble as the publican in pray'r:
To more than merited his kindness, kind,
And tho' in manners harsh, of friendly mind:
Deep-ting'd with melancholy's blackest shade,
And, tho' prepar'd to die, of death afraid—
Such JOHNSON was—of him with justice vain,
When will this nation see his like again?

C.

SONNET.

To Miss ———, on her Birth-day.

'Tis not the beaming eye, whose pow'rful ray
  Can awe or soften, quicken or controul;
'Tis not the beauties that around thee play,
  Which wake the sense, and steal into the soul.
'Tis not those charms which in a court would shine,
  The magic voice, and the harmonious lay,
That call affection to thy natal shrine,
  And bid me there the votive homage pay:
No—'tis the mental graces as they blend,
  With manly sense and tenderness combin'd,
And all th' endearing virtues of the friend,
  Within thy warm and feeling heart enshrin'd.
No—'tis not to th' angelic form I bend—
  I bend me to the more angelic mind.

C.

TO THE PUBLIC.

When we proposed to spread our table for an intellectual feast, we were not vain or sanguine enough to imagine that our banquet would be exempt from the attacks of the newspapers, who, like the harpies in Virgil, infest the whole town,

——————defiling all they find;
And parting, leave a loathsome stench behind.

Two of them, " The Morning Post," and " The Times," vented their spleen in early assaults; the former, from the chair of authority, pronounced on our first number, that " such a lump of dullness and stupidity never before issued from the press:" the latter, giving us an equal portion of dullness, was pleased to add something about an *impudent attempt to impose on the public*. With respect to dullness and stupidity, we are not allowed to judge for ouselves, and can therefore only submit to that tribunal which must decide between the witty puns of the Post and the Times, and those efforts which the *modest* and *impartial* conductors of those prints are pleased to condemn as dull. But when we are accused of impudently attempting to impose on the public, we are only restrained by a conviction that we should obtain nothing but a shuffling, prevaricating, lying answer, from demanding some explanation of the charge.

Impudence, and an attempt to impose, are allegations which do not apply to the literary character of our work, but to the personal characters of those engaged in it. In this way it has been viewed by our friends, and they have not only afforded us the most gratifying assurances of satisfaction and confidence, but in their zeal have furnished abun-

dant means of retorting, by exposing the characters of those who thus insolently calumniate us. But we disdain the contest.

The Chronicle attacked us with more moderation, and only began on Wednesday; the purblind Conductor did not perhaps know, that only two days before he was pleased to utter insinuations against our dullness, some of his underlings had stolen (or to soften the phrase, taken without permission or acknowledgment) from our paper a poem and a paragraph.

All these prints are pleased to style our paper that of the Pic Nic Society; if they mean the company of Amateur performers who acted last year in Tottenham-street, it may be well for us to inform our readers, that this publication is not in any way connected with that Society; nor indeed do we know that it at present exists.

Here we quit the subject of newspaper attacks, in which, as relating to ourselves, we are most unwillingly involved;* and it is not our intention, unless our duty to our subscribers and ourselves should imperiously re-

* At the moment this article was finished, the following note was left at our Office:

"Mr. Editor, Friday, January 14, 1803.

"Your paper is attacked in this day's Oracle, but do not say any thing, and nobody will know it."

quire it, to enter again on the field. We have no objection to expose the infamy of Thersites and Pandarus, but a contest with them is too degrading to be voluntarily undertaken.